

Use this toolkit of key messages and social media content to educate your community about the importance of preparedness. The content in this toolkit is based on the PEMA and FEMA preparedness messaging calendars and is ready for you to use to help make a Ready PA.

This month's topics:	Tools:
Holiday Travel Safety Winter Weather Safety Cold & Flu Sign Up for the Ready PA Newsletter Ready PA Blog	Social Media Messages Graphics Talking Points

Holiday Travel Safety

Social Media Messages/Graphics: Holiday Travel Safety

Winter Car Kit

7 essential items to keep in the car this winter:

1. Warm clothes, blankets, hand warmers 🧣
2. Ice scraper/brush 🧽
3. Nonperishable snacks & bottled water 💧
4. Jumper cables ⚡
5. Flashlight 🔦
6. Small folding shovel 🏠
7. Sand or cat litter 🐾

More: ready.pa.gov



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Social Media Messages/Graphics: Holiday Travel Safety

Snow Squall Pileup Safety

If snow squalls are in the forecast, delay or cancel travel if you can.

If there's a snow-related pileup:

- ✓ Get as far away from the road as possible
- ✓ Stay seated in your car if you can't exit safely
- ✓ Slowly move your car to the front
- ✗ Never stand on or near the roadway



[Download graphic](#)

Alerts

Know before you go this holiday season.

- 🚗 Sign up for traffic alerts: 511pa.com
- 📞 Get weather alerts sent to your phone: on.pa.gov/alerts



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Talking Points: Holiday Travel Safety

Plan Your Travel during Winter Weather Carefully

- During a winter storm, minimize your travel by car. Even if winter weather conditions aren't obviously present, conditions like black ice can cause vehicles to lose control.
- If you plan on traveling by vehicle during the winter, make sure to winterize your vehicle. Check (or have a mechanic check) the following items in your car:
 - Ensure that antifreeze levels are sufficient to avoid freezing.
 - Ensure your battery and ignition are in top condition and battery terminals are clean.
 - Check for wear and fluid levels of breaks.
 - Check for leaks and crimped pipes in your exhaust system, and repair/replace as necessary. Carbon monoxide is deadly and usually there is no warning of its presence.
 - Fuel and air filters - replace and keep water out of the system by using additives and maintaining a full tank of gas. A full tank will keep the fuel line from freezing.
 - Ensure your heater and defroster are working properly.
 - Check your lights and hazard lights to ensure they're working properly.
 - Check your oil level and weight. Heavier oils can congeal more at low temperatures and do not lubricate as well.
 - Repair any problems with your windshield wipers and maintain proper washer fluid levels.
 - Install good winter tires with adequate tread. Remember that some jurisdictions may require vehicles be equipped with chains or snow tires with studs.
- Keep a winter weather supply kit in your vehicle, including:
 - Shovel
 - Windshield scraper and small broom
 - Flashlight
 - Battery-powered radio
 - Extra batteries
 - Water
 - Food
 - Matches
 - Extra clothing and blankets to keep warm, such as coats, hats, socks, mittens, etc.
 - First aid kit
 - Medications
 - Tow chain or rope
 - Jumper cables
 - Road salt and sand
 - Emergency flares
 - Fluorescent distress flag

Winter Weather Safety

Social Media Messages/Graphics: Winter Weather Safety

Prepare for winter storms and cold weather with the kids by playing the disaster master game: www.ready.gov/kids/games Password hint: SLEET

Although winter comes as no surprise, many of us may not be ready for its arrival. Stay safe and healthy when temperatures start to fall by preparing indoors & outdoors. Learn more - <http://go.usa.gov/7Jp4>

Winter Weather Tips

KNOW WINTER WEATHER TERMS

- Watch = winter storm is possible in your area. Follow local officials and media for tips and updates.
- Advisory = conditions expected to cause major delays and may be hazardous. Use caution.
- Warning = winter storm is occurring or will occur soon in your area.

WINTER STORM TIPS

- Prepare for possible power loss: add warm clothes to emergency kit, check flashlight and radio batteries, charge mobile devices, fill car tank, take cash out (ATM's may not work).
- Only use generators in open areas away from windows and home to prevent carbon monoxide poisoning.
- Bring pets/animals inside and move livestock to sheltered areas with non-frozen drinking water.



Winter weather is here. Don't wait to stock your vehicle with emergency items. Learn more: <http://bit.ly/BuildYourVehicleKit>



[Download this graphic.](#)

#WINTERREADY

Social Media Messages/Graphics: Winter Weather Safety continued

Be prepared for winter. Sign up for PA weather alerts: bit.ly/Alert-PA



[Download](#) this graphic.

Put a **FREEZE** on Winter Fires

Did you know? As you stay cozy and warm this winter, stay fire smart!

DEC JAN FEB

Half of all home heating fires occur in December, January and February.

Plug only **1 heat-producing appliance** (like a space heater) into an electrical outlet at a time.

Keep anything that can burn **at least 3 feet** from any heat source.

U.S. Fire Administration | Fire is Everyone's Fight | NFPA

The graphic features a thermometer icon on the left, a plug icon, and an icon of a bed with a red double-headed arrow labeled "3 feet" between it and a radiator icon. Logos for the U.S. Fire Administration, "Fire is Everyone's Fight", and NFPA are at the bottom.



Talking Points: Winter Weather Safety

- [Winter weather](#) can occur anywhere and can include freezing rain, ice, snow, high winds, or a combination of all these conditions.
- Winter weather can cause power outages that last for days or weeks, making it hard to keep warm, taking out communication networks, and making travel very dangerous. Heavy snowfall and extreme cold can immobilize an entire region.
- Winter storms can range from moderate snow over a few hours to a blizzard with blinding, wind-driven snow that lasts for several days. Many winter storms are accompanied by dangerously low temperatures and sometimes by strong winds, icing, sleet, and freezing rain.
- Winter storms can be deadly. Many deaths can be indirectly linked to them, such as from exposure to the cold, traffic accidents on icy roads, etc.
- It's important to be prepared for winter weather, from stocking your kit with extra food and water to having a family plan. If you'll be traveling during the winter or for the holidays, it's important to plan your travel with winter weather considerations in mind.
- Know your terms and what actions to take. Be alert to weather reports and tune in for specific guidance when these conditions develop.
 - **Freezing Rain:** Rain that freezes when it hits the ground, creating a coating of ice on roads, walkways, trees and power lines.
 - **Sleet:** Rain that turns to ice pellets before reaching the ground. Sleet also causes moisture on roads to freeze and become slippery.
 - **Wind Chill:** Wind chill is the temperature it "feels like" when you are outside. The NWS provides a [wind chill calculator](#) to show the difference between air temperature and the perceived temperature and the amount of time until frostbite occurs.
 - **Winter Weather Advisory:** The NWS issues a winter weather advisory when conditions are expected to cause significant inconveniences that may be hazardous. If caution is used, these situations should not be life-threatening.
 - **Winter Storm Watch:** A winter storm is possible in your area. The NWS issues a winter storm watch when severe winter conditions, such as heavy snow and/or ice, may affect your area but the location and timing are still uncertain.
 - A winter storm watch is issued 12 to 36 hours in advance of a potential severe storm. Tune in to your NOAA Weather Radio, local radio, TV, or other news sources for more information.
 - Monitor alerts, check your emergency supplies, and gather any items you may need if you lose power.
 - **Winter Storm Warning:** A winter storm is occurring or will soon occur in your area.
 - **Blizzard Warning:** Sustained winds or frequent gusts to 35 miles per hour or greater and considerable amounts of falling or blowing snow (reducing visibility to less than a quarter mile) are expected to prevail for a period of three hours or longer.
 - **Frost/Freeze Warning:** Below freezing temperatures are expected.

Cold & Flu

Social Media Messages/Graphics: Cold & Flu



The main differences

between COVID-19, a cold, the flu and hay fever:

Symptoms	COVID-19	Cold	Flu	Hay fever
Fever	●●●●	●	●●●●	● ³
Tiredness	●●	●●	●●●●	●●
Cough	●●●● ¹	●●●	●●●● ¹	●●
Sneezing	-	●●●●	-	●●●●
Joint pain	●●	●●	●●●●	-
Runny nose	●	●●●●	●●	●●●●
Sore throat	●●	●●●●	●●	● ⁴
Diarrhea	●	-	●● ²	-
Headache	●●	●●	●●●●	●
Shortness of breath	●●	-	-	●● ⁵
Itchy eyes	-	-	-	●●●
Impaired sense of smell and/or taste	●●	●	●	-

Symptoms		¹ – Dry cough	⁴ – Burning / itching
Typical	●●●●	² – In children	⁵ – Allergic asthma
Frequent	●●●	³ – Mild fever	
Occasional	●●		
Rare	●		

Based on: German Federal Association of Statutory Health Insurance Physicians [in German: Kassenärztliche Bundesvereinigung] Robert Koch Institute's information on COVID-19

Talking Points: Cold & Flu

What is a "cold"?

- Common colds, or simply "colds," are usually quite harmless and go away again on their own. The symptoms of a cold such as a cough, sore throat and a runny nose can be really annoying.
- A severe cold can make you feel weak and ill.
- Occasionally, colds are mistaken for the flu. But flu symptoms are usually much worse.
- A flu doesn't develop gradually. Instead, it generally starts suddenly with a high fever, chills, and aching muscles and joints.
- Colds can be caused by various viruses. They lead to inflammations in the lining of the nose and throat but are otherwise harmless.

What is the "flu"?

- Flu is a contagious respiratory illness caused by influenza viruses that infect the nose, throat, and sometimes the lungs.
- It can cause mild to severe illness, and at times can lead to death.
- The best way to prevent flu is by getting a flu vaccine each year.

Cold Symptoms

- Most people get colds in the winter and spring, but it is possible to get a cold any time of the year. Symptoms usually include:
 - sore throat
 - runny nose
 - coughing
 - sneezing
 - headaches
 - body aches

Flu Symptoms

- Influenza (flu) can cause mild to severe illness, and at times can lead to death.
- Flu symptoms usually come on suddenly.
- People who have flu often feel some, or all, of these symptoms:
 - fever or feeling feverish/chills (not everyone with the flu will have a fever)
 - cough
 - sore throat
 - runny or stuffy nose
 - muscle or body aches
 - headaches
 - fatigue (tiredness)
 - some people may have vomiting and diarrhea, though this is more common in children than adults.

Cold Prevention

- Wash your hands often with soap and water. Wash them for 20 seconds, and help young children do the same. If soap and water are not available, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer. Viruses that cause colds can live on your hands, and regular handwashing can help protect you from getting sick.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands. Viruses that cause colds can enter your body this way and make you sick.
- Stay away from people who are sick. Sick people can spread viruses that cause the common cold through close contact with others.

Talking Points: Cold & Flu continued

Protect Others

- Stay at home and keep children out of school or daycare while sick.
- Avoid close contact with others, such as hugging, kissing, or shaking hands.
- Cough and sneeze into a tissue, then throw it away, or cough and sneeze into your upper shirt sleeve, completely covering your mouth and nose. Wash your hands after coughing, sneezing, or blowing your nose. Move away from people before coughing or sneezing.
- Disinfect frequently touched surfaces and objects, such as toys, doorknobs, and mobile devices.
- There is no vaccine to protect you against the common cold.

Flu Treatment

If you get sick:

- Take antiviral drugs, if prescribed by a health care provider
- Take everyday precautions to protect others while sick.
- Stay home until you are better.
 - If you are sick with flu-like illness, CDC recommends that you stay home for at least 24 hours after your fever is gone except to get medical care or for other necessities. Your fever should be gone without the use of fever-reducing medicine.

Flu Prevention

- The best way to reduce your risk from seasonal flu and its potentially serious complications is to get vaccinated every year.
- Follow the same preventative measures and actions as you would with the common cold, like sneezing into your sleeve, avoiding contact with those who are sick, cleaning and disinfecting, and avoiding touching your eyes, nose, and mouth.
- Stay home if you're sick. Stop the spread.

Sign Up for the Ready PA Newsletter

We know: Your email is full of junk. Ours, too. 📧😓👤
But we have a monthly newsletter. And it has actually helpful info to keep you safe.
We know, we know. Everyone says their emails are different.
Tell you what: Browse here, then subscribe if you like what you see: bit.ly/ready-newsletter.



SUBSCRIBE TODAY AT [READY.PA.GOV](https://ready.pa.gov)

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READY PA MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

The newsletter is designed for all citizens and includes information about each of the monthly preparedness topics.

- When you receive the electronic copy, forward it to community groups, personal care homes, hospitals and schools, and more. You can encourage partners to [sign up here](#).
- Make the newsletter available on your website and promote it and its content via social media posts and more.
- Include a link to the most recent newsletter, which can be found on the [Ready PA website](#).

Ready PA Logo

www.ready.pa.gov



Logo

Your website and logo go here.

Ready PA Tip Sheet

Share the December Tip Sheet in your communications:

Avoid, Spot, Treat Frostbite & Hypothermia Tip Sheet:

https://www.cdc.gov/orr/infographics/00_docs/avoid-spot-treat-frostbite.pdf